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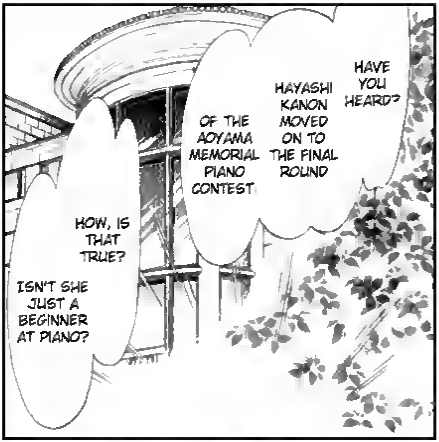
# Practice Piece⑪
# Melody of Light & Dark

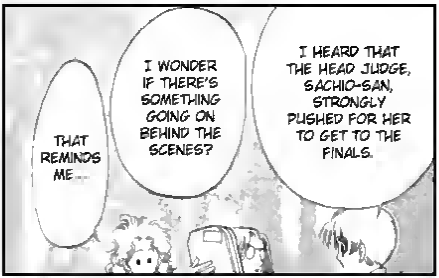
Aoyama Memorial Piano Contest
2nd Preliminary Round
HERE SHE COMES,
REMEMBER HER FROM THE 1ST ROUND?
SHE'S UP NEXT.
AHH...
THAT'S THE GIRL WHO SPLIT THE JUDGES' DECISIONS IN HALF, RIGHT?
THAT INSANE.. HAYASHI KANON.

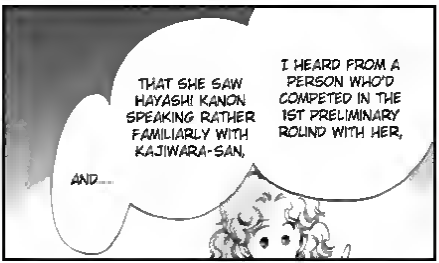
BANG
BANG
MAGNIFICENT.

THIS, KAJIWARA-SAN?
IT'S TOO ROUGH
I CAN BET MY NAME AS HEAD JUDGE
THAT IT'S BEAUTIFUL
INTERESTING...
WHAT A UNIQUE AND ASTONISHING TALENT SHE HAS.
YOU'RE SPARKLING LIKE A GEM STONE...
HAYASHI KANON...!!

AND ..?
SHE SAID SHE SAW
IT.
WHAT?

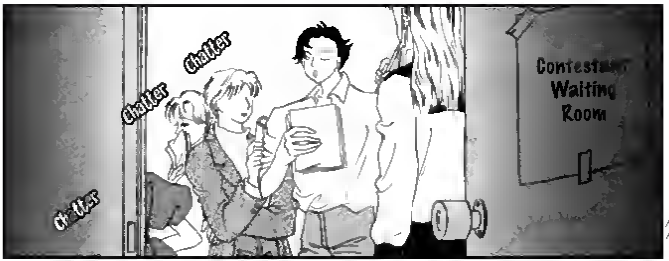

HAVE YOU HEARD?
HAYASHI KANON MOVED ON TO THE FINAL ROUND
OF THE AOYAMA MEMORIAL PIANO CONTEST.
HOW, IS THAT TRUE?
ISN'T SHE JUST A BEGINNER AT PIANO?


I HEARD THAT THE HEAD JUDGE, SACHIO-SAN, STRONGLY PUSHED FOR HER TO GET TO THE FINALS.
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON BEHIND THE SCENES?
THAT REMINDS ME...


I HEARD FROM A PERSON WHO'D COMPETED IN THE 1ST PRELIMINARY ROUND WITH HER,
THAT SHE SAW HAYASHI KANON SPEAKING RATHER FAMILIARLY WITH KAJIWARA-SAN,
AND...

KAJIWARA SACHIO KISSED HAYASHI KANON'S HAND.
IN THE 2ND PRELIMINARY ROUND, THEY WERE CLOSE TOO..
AND, THINK ABOUT IT, KAJIWARA-SAN IS FAMOUS FOR BEING A PLAYBOY, GOING AFTER YOUNG WOMEN
KAJIWARA...
Si-lence
Gasp
EASILY DECEIVED BY SOMEONE LIKE THAT...
Bang

UH. . MY BATON JUST BROKE.
LET'S CONTINUE FROM THE 96TH MEASURE.
It broke in half
17th Annual
Aoyama Memorial Piano Contest
Final Round Venue



I just wanted to meet Kajiwara....

I can't believe that I made it to the finals.

AHH,
SURE,
CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME OF YOUR TIME?
AFTER THIS CONTEST IS OVER I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO YOU.
BUT OF COURSE...!!
.....
Fa-ther
DO YOUR BEST,
I'LL BE WATCHING YOU

I'll
do my best...
As expected,
Everyone in the finals is amazing
I can't be compared to them.
But..

Makes me very happy
Just getting the chance to compete
What I really want is..
with a warm look
like a father's gaze.
There's someone watching over me.

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
To have at least one person,
This,
IT'S SO RELAXING AND I FELT LIKE I WAS BEING BLESSED
SHE WAS GOOD
who would love me...

She's from the same academy as me...
AND NOW THERE IS A SPECIAL AWARD,
GIVEN BY THE HEAD JUDGE
She was really good...
THE 11TH ANNUAL AOYAMA MEMORIAL PIANO CONTEST 1ST PLACE GOES TO
KASHIWABARA MAYU-SAN
FROM M ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Gap
Gap
Gap
What...?
HAYASHI KANON-SAN
FROM M ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Wink
THA— THANK YOU VERY MUCH
Is it proper.
An award for me...!?
CON-GRATU-LATIONS

LET'S LEAVE THIS BORING AFTER PARTY,
AND GO TO ANOTHER ONE WITH ME.
DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT WE'D GO ON A DATE AFTER THE CONTEST?
EH, BUT...
MIKAMI-SAN...!

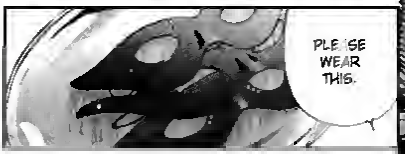
I WAS INVITED.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
MI KAMI-SAN?
HEY,
THEY GAVE ME SOMETHING CALLED THE HEAD JUDGE'S ENCOURAGE-MENT AWARD!
I KNEW YOU'D COME, MIKAMI-KUN
IT'S BEEN A WHILE

THIS YEAR, YOU HAD 6 STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS CONTEST
OUT-STAND-ING!
WE'LL CELEBRATE TOGETHER
LET'S GO!
THERE'S A BETTER PARTY WHERE ARTISTS ARE GATHERING.
SORRY, BUT I MUST DECLINE THAT OFFER.
WE'LL BE LEAVING NOW.
THE LAST TIME WE MET YOU WERE 14...
AFTER THAT YOU WERE LIVING OVERSEAS.
EVEN THOUGH WE BOTH BELONG IN THE SAME CIRCLE,
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE LAST SAW EACH OTHER...
Mikami-san doesn't like Kajiwara-san?
What...

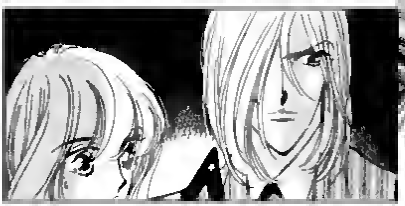
GOING TO THE PARTY WITH KAJIWARA-SAN!
I AM...
IT'S SCHOOL POLICY THAT NO STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED TO STAY OUT LATE
I WANT TO TALK WITH HIM A BIT MORE,
ABOUT THE PIANO...
AND MANY... OTHER THINGS...
.....
Because I..
Have something I wanted to ask Kajiwara Sachio

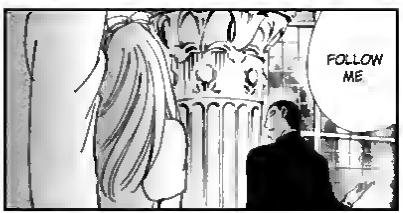
BUT...
Like if you can remember anything about my mother...
I received an award to you know
DIRECTOR MIKAMI!
I WANT TO GO TOO
!
ME TOO!
LET'S TAKE IT EASY FOR TODAY.
YOU GUYS
IT'S DECIDED THEN.
WE'LL GO TOGETHER
WOO HOO
And whether or not you are my father.
Tonight for sure...

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU,
EVERYONE IS ALREADY HERE.


PLEASE WEAR THIS.

LIKE THIS.
THAT LOOKS LIKE FUN.

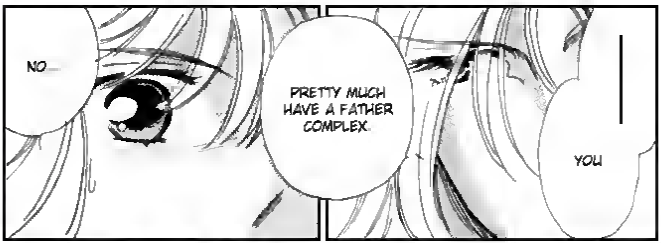


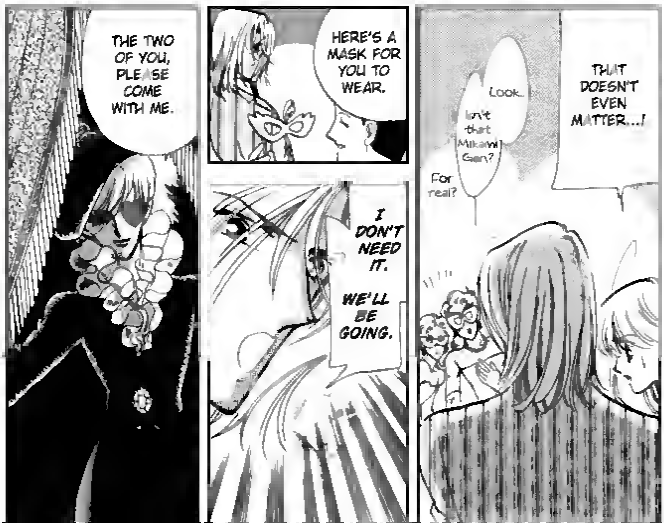

FOLLOW ME.

CLUB 37°

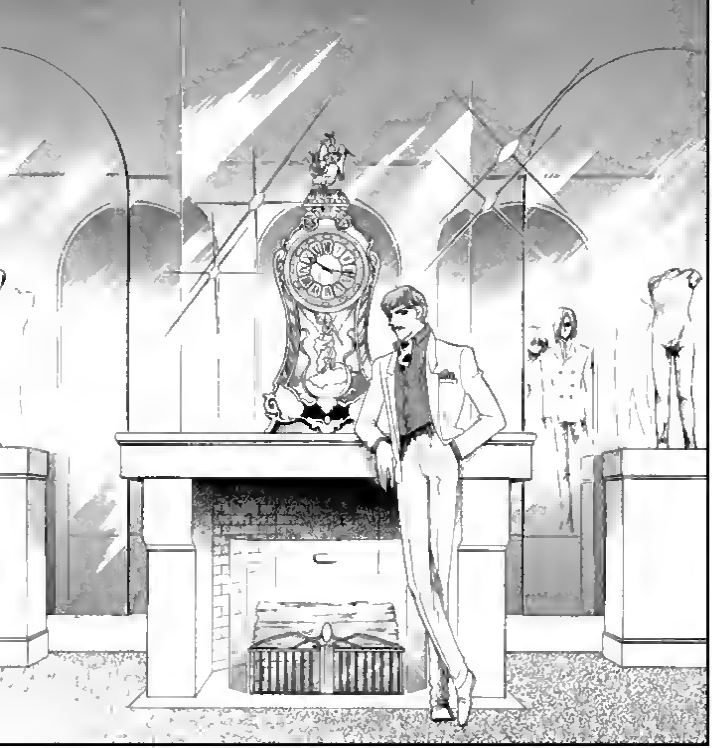
KAJI-WARA-SAN ♡
GOOD EVENING.
YOU'RE A PIANIST RIGHT?
HUH? HOW DID YOU KNOW...
I KNOW JUST BY LOOKING AT YOUR FINGERS
Hehehe
HOW SO?
Hehehe
YOU BRING SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE AGAIN, SUCH A BAD MAN.

Do you know what kind of artist I am?
Huh? What are you.
EVERYONE LOOKS SUSPICIOUS,
KAJIWARA INCLUDED
KAJIWARA-SAN IS A GOOD PERSON,
DON'T TALK BAD ABOUT HIM.


YOU
PRETTY MUCH HAVE A FATHER COMPLEX.
NO...


THAT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER...!
Look. Isn't that Mikami Gen?
For real?
HERE'S A MASK FOR YOU TO WEAR.
I DON'T NEED IT.
WE'LL BE GOING.
THE TWO OF YOU, PLEASE COME WITH ME.

THE TWO OF YOU ARE KAJIWARA'S SPECIAL GUESTS,
SO I'LL BE TROUBLED IF YOU WENT HOME
FOLLOW ME
Boy? Or a girl?
It's like..
we're in a maze.
THIS WAY.
WE CAN GO EVEN FURTHER?
PLEASE, ENJOY YOUR-SELVES.
Shut



YOU BROUGHT US HERE FOR THAT?
RELAX.
EVEN IF YOU PLAYED THE PIANO AS LOUD AS YOU CAN, SOUND WON'T LEAK TO THE OUTSIDE.
SO WE CAN EVEN TALK ABOUT SOMETHING THAT IS A SECRET.
THIS ROOM WAS SPECIALLY PROVIDED FOR ME, SO YOU CAN RELAX.

AT LEAST
THIS TALENTED YOUNG LADY WANTED TO SPEAK WITH ME IN PRIVATE
Does this person...
Know?
Could it be...
he really is
my father...?
DON'T BE NERVOUS,
LET'S REFRESH OURSELVES BEFORE WE CHAT
IT'S A RATHER WEAK WINE
WON'T YOU DRINK IT?

.....
MIKAMI-KUN, YOU SHOULD LIGHTEN UP A LITTLE BIT
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T BE ALONE WITH HER.
THAT'S WHY I ASKED YOU TO COME HERE?
HERE'S TO YOUR TALENT
AND TO YOUR SHINING FUTURE...
CHEERS!
my father...
he just might be...
This time...

IN HONOR OF THIS OCCASION,
LET ME PLAY YOU A PIECE.
IT'S A "WALTZ" BY CHOPIN FROM THE FIRST PRELIMINARY ROUND THAT KANON PLAYED,
WE'LL TALK AFTER THAT.
HEY, MIKAMI-KUN...
DO YOU THINK I COULD HAVE KANON-KUN AS MY STUDENT?
SHE HAS A NATURAL TALENT AS A PIANIST.
Ha...
YOU ALSO SAID THE SAME THING BEFORE ABOUT NEVER TOUCHING A PIANO,
BUT I FORCED YOU TO PLAY THE PIANO AND...
THAT CAN'T BE...
HER TALENT IS FOR THE VIOLIN.

THAT'S ENOUGH.
YOU WOULD'VE BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PIANIST.....
IF YOU'D STAYED WITH ME,
IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM.
NO!
WAS THAT THE REASON YOU QUIT PIANO?
COLLAPSE
STRANGE,
I FEEL LIKE.... I DON'T HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER MY BODY.
.....
Just from one glass of wine?
MIKAMI...
ARE YOU DRUNK?

WHAT DID YOU...
PUT IN OUR DRINKS!?
KAJIWARA.
Chuckle
I PUT INTO YOUR GLASSES.
A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ALCOHOL...
IT'LL SLOWLY PARALYZE YOUR BODIES
Strong alcohol!?
DEPENDING ON THE PERSON, YOU NORMALLY CAN'T MOVE FOR AT LEAST AN HOUR AFTER IT TAKES AFFECT.
IT SEEMS,
TO WORK SLOWER ON WOMEN

KANON!
RUN AWAY BEFORE THE ALCOHOL TAKES EFFECT.
DON'T MIND ME...
But...
This person is my...
Grab
THE REASON THAT YOU APPROACHED ME,
WAS BECAUSE YOU WANTED ME TO DO THIS
AM I RIGHT?

He's not my...
He's not my...
WOMEN
No,
HAVE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT,
EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM...
this person,
He's not my father...

My father,
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH HER?
It's the person who brought us here.
DO AS YOU LIKE.
This person... is a boy.
can't really be this kind of man...
THE ONE I'M INTERESTED IN,
IS HIM

MIKAMI GEN...
YOU REJECTED ME
AS A 19-YEAR-OLD BOY...
What will Kajiwara do to Mikami..?
MIKAM!...
YOU GUYS

KA... NON?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, LET GO.
Grab
Pull
AH...
What?
WITH HER.
DO WHAT-EVER YOU LIKE

TAKE HER.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO MIKAMI...
LET ME GO.
MIKAMI...
SLAM

MIKUMI GEN.
IT'S BEEN 10 YEARS.
BUT I FINALLY GOT THE CHANCE TO DO IT.
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO SET YOU FREE...
Kanon 3 The End
Puchi Comics Serialized 1995

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